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TAGS: [PTER](#) [EFIN](#) [KCRM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#) [GM](#)
SUBJECT: SHUTTING DOWN THE PKK IN FRANCE AND GERMANY:
EMBASSY BERLIN STRATEGY

REF: A. STATE 35685

- [1](#)B. FEB 16 KOUMANS - SNOW/HUNT/FISHER EMAIL
- [1](#)C. 05 BERLIN 3168
- [1](#)D. 05 BERLIN 3506
- [1](#)E. 05 BERLIN 3796
- [1](#)F. 05 BERLIN 4162
- [1](#)G. MARCH 16 KOUMANS - SNOW/HUNT/FISHER EMAIL

Classified By: DCM John A. Cloud for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (S) Upon receipt of Ref A, DCM chaired a meeting of relevant members of the country team and post raised the issue of PKK support in Germany with the Turkish DCM and senior members of the German government. German officials state an awareness of the threats posed by the PKK and a readiness to do more to combat them, but express some frustration at Turkish efforts to date regarding requests for extradition and other assistance, and note resource constraints and obstacles posed by German courts. The Turkish Embassy, while angry over PKK activity in Germany and eager for more German action, did not appear heavily engaged in dialogue or other efforts with German officials to improve the status quo. Post will continue to engage and push German officials on the PKK, particularly in the context of overall cooperation in fighting terrorism, but it may be necessary for the Turkish government to energize further its embassy and to ensure they take an active lead.
Country Team Meeting

[1](#)2. (S) The DCM and EMIN chaired an interagency meeting March 7 with Legat and others to discuss the requests in ref A, to examine what German law enforcement and other authorities are currently doing, and to map out a strategy for working with the Turkish Embassy here as well as with the Germans to ratchet up the efforts. An integral part of the effort would be raising the PKK in discussions regarding fighting other terrorist groups as well as direct approaches to German authorities to achieve specific steps regarding the PKK. Some of the agencies present noted it would be useful if they received specific instructions from their headquarters as well regarding the higher USG focus on the PKK.

Interior Ministry

[1](#)3. (S) EMIN raised the PKK issue with Interior Ministry State Secretary August Hanning March 14. Hanning in reply referred

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to ongoing German efforts to prosecute PKK ringleaders (refs C-F) and said Germany takes a "hard line" with the PKK. Hanning noted the Interior Ministry's ban on E. Xani Publishing (publisher of Ozgur Politika, which the Interior

Ministry said was tied to the PKK when the MOI moved to ban it in late 2005; refs E and F). Hanning regretted the German court's decision to block the ban, but stressed E. Xani remains under close surveillance by German authorities and that the investigation continues. "We are watching money collection and transfer," said Hanning and elaborated that the PKK raised money -- sometimes forcibly -- in Germany and moved it to Turkey. Interior Ministry staff told emboffs the German government is still deliberating whether and how to reinstate the ban by redrafting the law.

Turkish Embassy, Part One

¶4. (C) EMIN met with Turkish DCM Adnan Basaga March 16 (ref G) on the issue and the need to coordinate approaches to the Germans. Basaga, who is serving for the third time in Germany, described a prior tour when he was assigned to a Turkish Consulate in Germany during a period of PKK attacks on Turkish missions. He recounted coming to work after the PKK had attacked and burned his office. Basaga said Germany at the time had cited the PKK's social and political goals and had remained ambivalent until the early 1990s, when the PKK attacked German law enforcement personnel. In 1994 came the German ban on the PKK. Basaga blamed the PKK for "the majority of drug smuggling and sales in Germany" (NOTE: DEA at post cannot confirm the allegation, but notes Turkish nationals, whether PKK members or not, are important players in heroin imports into Germany, as are Russians and nationals of other countries. End Note.) Basaga also stated the PKK is engaged in extortion and other fundraising among the 2.5 million Turks and other individuals in Germany. He estimates the PKK raises 40 million Euros a year here and said the organization's "brains" are in Germany. Reiterating some of the points Counselor Kemal Tuzun made previously (para 6 below; ref B) Basaga said the PKK also recruits fighters and trains them in northern Iraq. Basaga provided EMIN with a copy of Ozgur Politika, which is written in Turkish and

Kurdish, and pointed to advertisements he says are inflammatory, including one showing the PKK flag and calling for Kurds to participate in a March 18 demonstration in Frankfurt. Basaga showed his frustration when he claimed Kurdish demonstrators in Germany openly wear T-shirts and carry signs featuring the PKK flag and imprisoned leader Ocalan, but alleged that "surely" German authorities would not let demonstrators wear Usama Bin Laden T-shirts.

¶5. (C) Basaga asked EMIN to wait before contacting German authorities; he said their instructions from Ankara are that "they go first." EMIN replied the two Embassies should stay in close touch, but we were reluctant to change an appointment with MFA Counterterrorism Commissioner Georg Witschel (para 7 below). EMIN agreed, however, to delay talking further to the MOI until the Turkish Embassy had a chance. We provided the Turks with the names of some key people they might meet, and designated Tuzun and Acting Global Affairs Counselor as our working points of contact (NOTE: Basaga and Tuzun gave the impression they were not in regular contact with German CT officials; they were unfamiliar with names and titles. END NOTE).

¶6. (C) On the subject of German legal assistance, in an earlier meeting February 15 with Global Affairs Acting Counselor, Tuzun complained German courts reject nearly all Turkish extradition requests. He admitted some requests had thin documentation, but not all; some he said were well documented. Tuzun said Turkey gave Germany a "four page proposal" on a German-Turkish exchange program for CT scholars, prosecutors and judges to try to address this problem.

Foreign Ministry

¶7. (S) EMIN met MFA Counterterrorism Commissioner Georg Witschel and a member of his staff March 20 to continue to press USG concerns. Witschel noted the size of the Turkish

population and its dispersal in Germany. He said the German police had a surprising shortage of Turkish, let alone Kurdish, speaking personnel. They nevertheless, he said, watched carefully for possible violent acts, including by PKK youth and splinter groups. Germany sees demonstrations, fund raising, propaganda and "low level violence," but no serious violence or killings. The PKK was still suffering in the aftermath of the Ocalan capture, Witschel stated; organizationally it was not as strong as it had been. That said, Witschel believes a new leadership was emerging as the recent violence in Turkey suggested. According to Witschel, the PKK has a well-organized system of about 14 subgroups with a European, German, and regional hierarchical military-style structure. Several thousand PKK members in Germany are involved in fund raising, but a smaller number are in the leadership, he said. There are tens of thousands of PKK supporters in Germany, Witschel said, some voluntary and some forced. It would overwhelm German law enforcement to target all PKK supporters, so it targeted the leadership. Witschel claimed French, Belgian, and Dutch authorities faced the same problem. Witschel referred to the September 2005 arrest (ref E) of PKK leader Halil Dalkilic in Germany. EMIN provided Witschel with information about Sakine Cansiz.

18. (S) Turning to international cooperation, Witschel said Germany and Turkey had an annual counterterrorism dialogue, the next meeting of which is scheduled to take place in late summer or early autumn in Ankara. Turkish extradition requests, he said, were "spotty," with some merely containing transcripts of newspapers articles. Witschel discussed possible ways the Germans might move the issue to the front burner in the EU, e.g., raising it in the context of the international counterterrorism conference the Germans are planning in June, raising it in EU fora and meetings of the Schengen countries. He also proposed law enforcement agencies from key countries -- e.g., France, Germany and the Benelux -- meet to consider a better way forward. Witschel agreed to discuss these ideas with the Interior Ministry.

19. (C) Witschel followed up the meeting with a call to EMIN March 24 reporting that he had looked into the situation regarding Sakine Cansiz with the Interior Ministry and others and found out that German authorities are concerned about her and regard her as dangerous. The Turkish government has requested her extradition from Germany and the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) has a detention order on file for Cansiz dated November 2002. Witschel said German authorities continue to be on the look out for her, but could provide no further information at this juncture.

Turkish Embassy, March 31 Update

110. (C) Tuzun responded March 31 to emails and phone calls from Acting Global Affairs Counselor. He said he met with MFA Counterterrorism Acting Office Director Suzanne Welter March 29 and DCM Basaga met MOI Counterterrorism Gerhard Schindler on March 30 to convey "talking points agreed to between Ankara and Washington." Tuzun outlined German responses (which were similar to those in para 7 and 8). Both ministries had also stressed German intentions to renew the ban on Ozgur Politika / E. Xani via a change to the law; but that the process of drafting the law and obtaining its approval would take time. (Note: Tuzun seemed somewhat surprised and encouraged by this news. End Note.) Tuzun also noted the German Justice Ministry March 28 sent the Turkish Embassy a one sentence rejection to the Turkish Justice Ministry's extradition requests for 26 PKK leaders resident in or located in Germany. Asked about the strength of the cases, Tuzun said he had to check. Tuzun said he used the opportunity to renew and refine the Turkish proposal for intensified bilateral dialogue between the Turkish and German Ministries of Justice; he awaits the German reply.

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